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PRESS

Careers Today
Psychology Today

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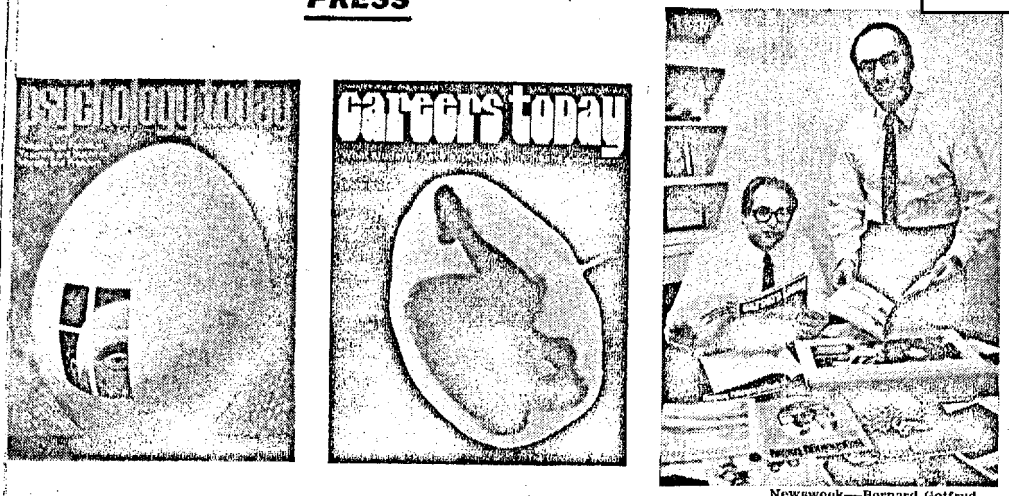

Newsweek—Bernard Gotfryd

Charney, Veronis: Can 1,072 human interests be all bad?

'Upside-Down Fortune'

"There are two important concerns for young people: sex and work," says 27-year-old Nicolas Charney, the boy publisher of Del Mar, Calif. "Playboy has sex tied up, but there is no magazine that tells them about possible careers." And so in January, the imaginative and ambitious Charney will publish the first monthly issue of Careers Today, a slick monthly directed at college students and recent graduates. "It will be an upside-down Fortune," says Charney, "for newcomers rather than board chairmen."

Charney, of course, is already a board chairman. He graduated from MIT in 1962 and received a doctorate in biopsychology from the University of Chicago in 1966, and now he is running his own fledgling publishing firm—Communications/Research/Machines/Inc. Careers Today will be CRM's second magazine; the first is Psychology Today, a monthly which Charney started in May of 1967 and which now claims a circulation of 350,000. And Charney plans to start at least a half dozen others. "Every eighteen months," CRM president John J. Veronis, 40, a former publisher of The Ladies' Home Journal, says grandly, "we'll come out with a new magazine."

Surf: Most of CRM's 130 employees (average age: less than 28) are quartered in five makeshift buildings in Del Mar, a suburb of San Diego. The company has hired T George Harris, 44, a former Look senior editor, to be managing editor of Careers Today. He has already put together a pilot issue. "I wouldn't have considered starting a new magazine in New York," he says. "It's self-contained; writers and editors there just talk to one another and are unaware of what's going on in the nation itself." Harris, who frequently holds staff meetings outdoors with the Pacific surf pounding in the background, adds: "Be they good or bad, new social phenomena are apt to boil to the surface out here first."

Charney and Veronis hit upon the idea for a psychology magazine independently and were brought together by Charney's father, meteorologist Jule Charney, and Veronis's brother, oceanographer George Veronis, who were colleagues at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. "While I was in school I wondered why there wasn't a psychology magazine," says Charney. "The field is so broad, everything from what color to paint the walls in your factory to how to bring up your kids." Veronis had been a member of Communications '77—a task force at the Interpublic Group of Companies, Inc., that was set up to decide what magazines the public needed and would buy. The task force identified 1,072 human interests. They eliminated most interests because there were magazines serving the field (sex), people were interested but didn't want to read about the subject (exercise bars) or people didn't spend enough money in the field. One interest that survived all tests was psychology. Another was futures for young people. The others? "If we spell them out," says Charney, "someone else might come out with magazines first."

Charney and Veronis raised $2 million, much of it from the First National City Bank of New York (the bank's pension fund is one of CRM's 27 stockholders). Charney and Veronis have spent about $1.5 million on a dazzling advertising campaign in national magazines. (Careers Today has a two-page ad in the December issue of Playboy.) Psychology Today does not carry much advertising, but with its price to readers ($1 per copy), Veronis and Charney say that it makes money nonetheless.

Subculture: Psychology Today considers itself in the same league with Scientific American, but it badly lags in editorial quality. It has run pieces by such scholars as B.F. Skinner and linguist Noam Chomsky. (The magazine pays outsiders $250 an article.) And managing editor Mary Harrington Hall, 42, a former consultant to San Diego magazine, has produced some interesting interviews with such people as Yale political scientist Harold Lasswell (President John son," says Lasswell, "had to struggle to achieve independence from his mother").

Unfortunately, there just isn't enough important new psychological research going to warrant a popular monthly. So Psychology Today has to stretch content out. And the pieces often seem more parlor game than professional psychology —such as a recent review of "Rosemary's Baby." Moreover, the graphics are so overwrought that they threaten the reader with sensory overload. "The magazine," says a former official of the American Psychological Association, "comes right out of that southern California subculture."

But like southern California, it may never stop growing. Charney and Veronis have just raised another $10 million and in addition to more magazines plan to publish books, start book clubs, make films and videotapes and develop computer teaching machines. Psychology Today, tomorrow the world.

RMN's Not the One

The problem began with Roosevelt and grew to its greatest proportions during the Eisenhower years. But for the next four years the dilemma—how to refer to the President in a short headline—has apparently disappeared.

Nixon's name is so short that he probably will be the first President since Hoover who will not be known by his initials. Roosevelt became FDR partly because of his long name and partly because he became President at a time when more and more newspapers were switching to larger and more graceful type that allowed space for fewer letters. HST, Ike, JFK and LBJ followed easily once the tradition had been established. Some papers, including The New York Times, have always rejected Presidential initials and nicknames as too undignified. During the 1950s, the Times had to cast a special piece of type that compressed the letters in Eisenhower's name. (It has a similar cast for Rockefeller.) "Nixon is the best President we've had since Hayes," says Theodore Bernstein, an assistant managing editor.

Light: The Chicago Tribune has referred to Nixon in headlines as "Dick" occasionally, as has The New York Daily News. "We only use it in a light story," says Michael O'Neill, an assistant managing editor of the News. "We would never use 'Dick' in a story about Vietnam." Most editors—and probably most Presidents—don't like headlines on a first name basis on any occasion. President-elect Kennedy had Pierre Salinger pass the word to newsmen that he wanted to be known as "JFK," not "Jack."

Vice President-elect Agnew may present a problem. Although his name has the same number of letters as Nixon's, it takes up more space. The "i" in Nixon counts only half a letter, but the "w" in Agnew counts a letter and a half. "We may have to use 'Spiro'," says Bob Moore, copy editor of The Dallas Morning News, "if he ever gets in the news."